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To

My beloved Margaret

from her affectate brother

on his 21st birthday

Brecon 30th June 1860.

THE

VISION OF THE CROSS,

AND

Other Poems.

BY

EDWARD ANDREW PHILLIPS, Esq.

Bengal Army.

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THE VISION OF THE CROSS.

AN ALLEGORICAL POEM.

Argument.

Earth. The Garden of Childhood. The many paths of Life all lead to the valley of Death. Receiving the Kingdom as a Child. A Flower of the Garden transplanted. Sympathy. The living Way. A Guide to the Hills. Vision of the Cross. The path of Error leads to Unbelief and Despair; Penitence: The Cross in the Storm. The missing Guide is revealed by the light of the Spirit, who leads to the place of Refuge. Resting on the Rock of Ages. The distant Hills.

THE VISION OF THE CROSS.

"And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."—*Isa.* iv. 6.

I OVERLOOKED a plain, extending wide,
As meets the eye of mariner, when morn
Struggling with night o'erruffles all the sea
With soft forerunning breeze, to break the mist
And clear a pathway for his tender light.
Faint, far, on every side a landscape dim,
Yet dimly beautiful, for fancy kind
Filled up the want of half-discernment fair,
As ever wont, with touches all her own;
Well shaped each tree, and every glimmering field

Thick stored with bounty, and herself surprised,
Half dreading clearer view which might distract
Enraptured sense, and harsher truths display.
Wider and wider ne'ertheless it grew,
In pleasant robes of varying light adorned,
Smiling from slumber fresh with heavenly dews.
Wild flowers as burst the sudden morn from far
Delighted blushed through all the silver mist
That veiled their beauty from the fervent light,
Trembling 'twixt fields and sky. Where first the Morn
Broke on the twilight stretched a shining chain
Of lofty hills, in mantling lustre robed,
And, stretching thence his glowing arms, he held
The purpled plain beneath in warm embrace.
Ten thousand orisons shook all the woods
With choral music, and from whispering dell
Wild echo challenged, and each stony rock
Moved to soft rapture with the general song,
Till filled the vault of smiling heaven with light,

And grateful Earth with rich harmonious praise.
Then first appear'd no more a plain my view,
Here verdant heights and bare, with steep descents,
And there deep dingles, ran through all its reach,
And forests smooth or broken mixed between
In mingled order, from its centre far
To small perspective; all the various views
Of scene familiar gathered, formed in one.

Now I a garden saw, by sparkling brooks
Profusely nourished, nor were noiser floods
Deep driven there, with loud tumultuous flow
To sound discordant, or dismay the charm
Of song sweet swelling from its rustling groves
To every glad retreat; but whispers breathed
From verdant plot, or wayside violet bed,
Snow-white and fragrant more than all beside,
Spoke still contentment, where, with gaudy wings
Of many powders, fanned the feathery shade

The airy butterfly, or sunny sport
Held drone and ladybird and numerous hordes
Of happy insects; and beneath the arms
Of spreading lime, beside the babbling rill,
Lay snow-white lambs till cooler hours of play.
These, held by narrow bounds, seemed fairer all
Than other prospect given; among the trees
Thick overarched, one path embowered ran
From midst its beauties to a gate that there
Closed on the wide expanse, without which lay,
Then distant circling, where the aching eye
To trace them failed, paths numberless outbranched,
Whilst arrowlike this centre way was laid,
Strait bound between; at one strange spot alone,
One hazy mount, (though there direct it led,)
Lost to my vision veiled; and far beyond
Burst forth again each errant path and this
In clear display, as 'neath an autumn sky
When noon is past, and lengthening falls the shade

On mistless meadow or unvaried moor,
Imbrowned by changes of the ripening year.
All I had seen from diverse prospects drawn
To me, at length,—a far spectator then—
Appeared to form one sunless passage broad
Through the deep bosom of a darksome vale,
Bound of all nearer than the sun-rise hills.
Dense fixèd gloom hung o'er its barren breast,
Where trees of aspect drear their naked boughs
Extended o'er that path, and canopied
Its solemn stillness, thickening with the gloom,
Buried in which at last the whole were lost.
No power had I to penetrate its depths,
But piercing deep in thought, at intervals
Broke the dull roll of waters on my ear,
As in its midst a loosened torrent raved,
Or tempest-tossed with surging billows smote
Its channel sides in strong tempestuous ire.
I shuddered, and exclaimed:—"What wisdom e'er

Would urge the footsteps onward, and so far,
E'en were it prone to yonder radiant hills,
Since further than that vale no road is shown
Upleading there, nor other path is found
(Welcome it were!) which shall not reach its shade?
Say, ye dark fields! oh, leafless bowers, declare!
Are ye not ever green? or, where the Sun
Averted calls away the trembling dawn,
Eternal do ye stand the tomb of Time
And Time's events?" Ere mine was hushed a voice,
Borne from the garden, bid me start and turn,
As light it echoed o'er the laughing meads.

There one did lean upon its gate and gaze
Beyond, as anxious for that freedom wide,
In admiration's longing wonder lost;
But not from him those merry accents rose
Which seemed a moment to disturb and change
His trancelike reverie: amidst the flowers

There strayed a lovely child, upon whose brow,
As sunshine on the streamlet, I beheld
The name of Peace imprinted soft and clear.
Ah, happy one! thy locks of gold were bright;
How deep the lustre of thy laughing eyes!
If e'er they wept, their bitterest tears were shed
Like April's early rain, which, as it falls,
Glad sunshine wipes away, and in the sky
Long dwells a deeper and serener blue.
"See," she exclaimed with eager voice again,
"Within this rosy arbour I have found
A volume placed, a shining treasure—see!
On all those paths beyond there cannot be,
My brother, aught so fair, or streams and flowers,
As these around, or beautiful as now
The prospect of yon rising hills from here!"

"Sister," the youth in thoughtless mood replied,
"Why there remain? the sunshine overhead

To show the splendour of yon spacious fields
Is given: Come, let us, in those valleys white
With daisies of the spring, together roam;
Or shall I but a little while be gone,
Of every bud that fairest there is found
To twine a wreath to deck my sister's brow?
Why still so silent? Peace, oh, tell me why
Thou car'st for nothing save those hills remote
We cannot reach? we know not *what* is there."

Like heavenly music to my ears arose
That babe's soft answer, that, with smile half sad,
To him, whose name was writ Unwise, she gave:—
"Their light is dear, nor there is valley dark
To fright me when I gaze, however far!
And what a beauteous place must that needs be
Whose sunshine tints these leaves and flowers around!
There often do I think can be no night,
For when at early hour the songs awake

And call me from my rest, first there I look,
And all is glorious, and my heart is glad :
Nor when the peaceful sea unrippled shines
Beneath the setting sun, and with the plains
Grows twilight grey, are they too shadow'd o'er,
Most lovely then ! And nightly gilded seen
When hours of sleep arrive ; for, turned on them,
These eyes scarce-willing close, and pictured scenes
Such as are there my happy dreams divide !
But more than all, the only hindrance here
To perfect pleasure is at last removed ;
For this straight path these eyes can now behold
Pass o'er the bosom of yon hazy mount
Above the vale, and to those realms I love :
Oh ! wondrous mount !"—She ceased ; a sight appeared
Of sudden glory strange ; for down that way
Came One exceeding beautiful and bright,
With rainbow splendour, wide-encompassed round,

Of heavenly mildness grand; such form perchance,
A God confessed, where every tribe and tongue
Before the golden image prostrate fell,
At sound of music upon Dura's plain,
The guilty Babylonian monarch awed;
Fourth in the powerless furnace of his pride,
And kindling wrath to Judah's children blest:
Though nought of terrible that aspect mild
Or fear imparted, with uneasy dread,
Unwise shrank back into the neighb'ring shade
Suspicious gazing, as when fallen of old
From lofty innocence to shame defiled,
The sound familiar of his Maker's tread
Bid Adam's heart grow faint, and to the trees
His footsteps hasten with ungrateful speed.
Meanwhile more lovely, but with paler face,
She who had watched him from afar was seen:
Nor once those eyes, grown wat'ry with the light,
Withdrew, nor once those tender hands unclasped.

It seemed the little fair one's heart would burst
With adoration great; and now He came
With outstretched arms, and took her kindly up
Into their bright protection — seemly rest
For beauteous Peace! From off a rosy bank
Where she had laid it, then the Book he raised,
And beckoning onward from his near retreat
Her frightened brother, in his hand laid down
The costly treasure, cased in burnished gold,
With clasp secured, in which a pearl was set
Of price unreckoned: yet as oft doth change
The object of a dream, transforming slow,
The wond'rous gem a crimson drop became —
The Volume's seal! from fear to fixed amaze
Grew too his thoughts who held the curious prize,
And sought to open, but the hand that gave
Restrained the effort, and slow bending o'er,
A breath more soft than even's passing sigh
The Bright One breathed, when quick it open flew,

And, to a thousand atoms shaken thus,
The crimson drop fell inward and bedewed
Its every page, which rich inspersion gave
The whole unearthly lustre strange to view.

Unwise methought for ignorance stood dumb;
Not Peace the same; with heavenly wisdom wise,
Clapping her little hands she straight began
A song of Heaven to sing: it could not be
Of Earth, for echoes, faint among the skies,
Were heard, which soon in wilder song burst forth,
Then angels robed in white passed overhead,
And floating downwards joined their anthems all,
Whilst hers grew less distinct, and far away
Died as the music of a dream at dawn!
"Oh, gentle Peace!" her watching brother cried,
"Why hast thou ceased with voice, so welcome e'er,
Of fond affection, aught to me to tell?
Midst all this glory now forget'st thou quite

I love thee still? Reach, reach thine hand to me!"
But He who held the precious burden gave
That loved one into angel arms, spread soft
To waft her upward to the longed-for hills,
E'en now less earthly than all pure as they.
From off her face those floating locks of gold
Fell shining back; and once again she smiled,
Whispering faintly as on high they rose,
"Follow, dear brother, this bright road — Farewell!"
Then o'er the open page his tears fell fast,
And hurried sobs through that fair garden hushed
The usual mirth, and made it solemn all.
He wept for her who might not ask him more
Beside his sister there content to roam,
Who loved it best and all its prospects fair.
"Now," he exclaimed, "I would at once away!
Each flower her hand has touched has lost its bloom;
And all the streams run mournfully, for ne'er
Her merry laugh shall join their echoes more!"

Thus he bewailed; and not rebuked or stilled
That outburst vehement by word or gaze
Of Him beside his bending form who stood;
For, bright beheld beneath that drooping lid,
A tear did rest, which in a while ran down
His radiant cheek and on a blighted rose
Shed its rich moisture, till it bloomed again!
Then turning to the youth he there addressed
Kind words of comfort, and instruction gave
To guard the Book, his future guide, for now
He must his journey to the hills extend
Through unknown scenes, since here He bid him know,
Should storms and tempests, of unsparing wrath,
Far from the setting sun sweep eastward dark,—
Rude desolate the garden's smitten bloom,
And lay the forest's shrinking shelter bare.

Methought he said, "In all this labyrinth
Of paths, but one with safety canst thou tread;

Within the pages of thy Guide 'tis called
The 'living way,' and there are all declared—
Their names and natures, and their ending one.
Eastward full many a league thou long hast seen
Those mountain heights, where lightsome morning first
Lay out his basking pinions on the sky,
Whence light through all the universe has drawn
Its primal essence; there are mansions there,
And to their adamantine city walls,
Whose streets of gold as glass transparent shine,
Are gates of pearl, there rivulets of life
Pure from its Prince's throne of sapphire roll
In crystal floods, on either verdant side,
Unfading foliage rustles sweet response
To seraph harps refined, and ever tuned
Thro' all the courts of Paradise divine;
Nor sun by day nor moon's pale beam shall smite
The pilgrim blest that once can enter there.

But since for thee for ever too remote
And inaccessible its rest to gain,
From wrath escaping, there is placed between
A needful shelter, and secure retreat:—
Diverging unto neither hand, pursue
The path of vision; canst thou thither see
Aught steep ascending, or aloof that soars
In gradual summit through the riven mist
Distinct from all?" The rising mount I saw
As thus he spoke: its base was stable rock,
Round which below full many a rudely torn
And straggling shrub, and many a barkless tree,
Betrayed the wreck that former storms had wrought;
But on the rock and up its bright ascent
No scar appeared, or other boding sign.
O'er all suffused, the selfsame vapour hung
That ever there had disappointed all
My wishful gaze, for on its crest within
Shone grassy greenness and enticing bloom.

"There," said the Bright one, "stedfast now thy gaze
Fix, as thy life is dear!—I go to lift
The cloud that always must conceal that spot
And Heaven's high-road without me; wait and see."
He ceased, and on my startled trance came down
A heavy darkness, wide revolving o'er
All buried prospect, save one space illumed,
Whence rose a sound as, swifter than their flow,
O'er many waters floats; for, round His form,
In columns thick rolled back the pond'rous mass,
And, centre of his self-born glory, He
Alone was seen. Not all that lost beside,
So dimly vanished, brought regret whilst He,
The only fairest, fixed my wand'ring eye;
But o'er himself the fearful veil at last
Condensed he drew! then gloomy sounds arose;
All nature groaned, and seemed to sit in chains
Thro' all the universe that rattling hung,—
A doleful prison; every pebbly stream

And wailing forest answering, wept unseen;
Could this be that my earliest wonder woke
With sweet surprise, now more to be compared
To realms of fallen spirits and despair?

"Oh, death itself," I heard a voice beneath
Stifled exclaim, "Oh, death itself than this
Were far more welcome! why hast thou,
Most glorious Being, thus withdrawn thy smile
From all around me, and resigned to woe
Spirit and nature?" While he spake the same,
O'er nature wide a glimmering faintly fell,
For, far suspended in the midway air,
A sudden globe of meteor-glory burst,
To a wide halo formed, wild wonders round!
Creation trembled, and, the death-like pause,
Sublime succeeding, from the verge of heaven
Came waves of music rolling thro' the world
Of choirs celestial; what a scene was there!

A man of sorrows, pale and wan with woe
And piteous anguish! on a cross He hung,
With tight-bound thorns His bleeding temples torn,
Hung on His bosom cold, in bitter death!
All, all alone! Ah, wherefore sound ye, sweet
Ethereal harpers? why, so late in tears,
Unfeeling nature, art thou silent now?
Was sorrow, e'er like His deep sorrow seen,
Whom Heaven hath sore afflicted? yet thou tun'st,
Seraph of light, some wondrous tale of love
Wiser than mortal, thus thy strains unknown
Flow from the confines of the heavenly world.
Prostrate in terror lay Unwise below,
Yet prostrate tearless, and in dumb dismay;
When sudden all this mystic vision changed;—
A silv'ry cloud broke o'er the Crucified,
And, floating thin in flexuous folds away,
The cross stood bare, and, leaning on its side,
Fair majesty serene! the crown He wore

From brier to myrtle grown of living bloom :
Each hill broke forth in singing, and the trees
Clapped all their hands, and nature smiled again
To see her King from victory restored !
" What meaneth this ?" I asked ; " and who is He
So sad, so beautiful, with garments dyed,
Alone who stands, and wears the myrtle crown ?"
Up to the skies His piercèd hand He raised,
And all the distance God-like echoes bore :—
" Weary and heavy laden, come to me
And I will give you rest ! come, ye who thirst,
These waters drink and never thirst again !
No money and no price, oh hungry soul,
To buy the bread of life my blood has bought,
Is needful here ; and that alone shall bid
Thee fear to touch the heavenly feast divine !
And come, thou pilgrim, with no strength, to find
Hell weak and Satan powerless to assail
Thee, mighty, here, and safe from every storm !"

Then methought the bright One, soaring swiftly,
Swept through the fields of space and left revealed
A pathway clear beneath the sheltering cross,—
High o'er the darksome valley to the hills,—
And bright it shone as his white garments spread,
Fused in the sunshine of the eastern skies,
And lost in light unshadowed far beyond.
Now did I mark the footsteps so upheld,
To glorious purpose, as upon his way
Unwise, o'er hill and vale, and often hid
In tangled wood, went on, till far behind
The garden lay, and seemed the cross more near;
Often at first in quiet shade he'd sit,
And search the pages of his guide awhile,
Then thus invigorate his path pursue;
But seldom later, weary and depressed
With toil fatiguing, though, the less he sought
For strengthening there, the tardier he sped.
Close to the living way where first aside

It outward branched, I now a path beheld
Of deadly snare, for all its worst deceit
Was subtle Error to display as truth
And all beside the Book's clear page confuse;
It passed a desert space beneath the rock,
And lures in fatal treachery so far
The expectant heart to refuge it disdains:—
(So, terrible beneath the placid deep,
To gentle undulation sparkling moved,
Lie couched the barbèd rocks: all fav'ring sweep
The guiltless winds, and swell the spheric sails;
Proud glides the gallant ship, and hearts of joy,
With thousand different pulsations wild,
Respond the music of the murmuring sea;—
But hark! what horror of confusèd cry
Bursts from the smitten planks, and with the crash
Of severed mast, across the pathless main,
Reverberates to the startled skies of noon!)
As cruel path, as prone to dreadful end,

And woe inevitable, this I saw;
And saw with pain the youthful pilgrim haste,
Therein unconscious, and his guide unsought!
Peace, happy Peace! thou didst not bid him there
Thy angel journey follow, with the last
Voice of affection in the garden breathed,
And fond farewell, nor, brighter vision, thou
Bid haste from danger to the cross secure,
So dearly purchased! and are all forgot?
Here many arbours of enticing show
Were round disposed with care in tempting shade,
By all a glassy rill went sparkling clear,
Filling with music low the tuneful groves,—
Delusive brook! the waters of whose flow
Supplied a course perverted from the bed
Of one which ran the straighter road along;
Steps to the cross, and, midway shelter, called,
Were all these bowers, poor screen from tempest bleak
Or cutting torrents, when the floods descend,

And rivers swell, and madness there to rest
Beholding life's eternal refuge nigh.
As wore the noonday stealingly along,
Unwise would gaze, at times, where far behind
His loved companion wandered at his side,
And wish 'twere morn again, thrice happy morn!
And then would doubtful grow as much his wont.

Across his path, when many a weary mile
Erroneous wandered, stretched an opening glade,
His heart reviving: for no future now
Distressed or troubled as his present toil:—
About exhausted to recline him there,
First one coiled serpent startled, then would move
The yellow grass in live commotion all,
And, backward springing, scarce their darts he 'scaped
Whose eyes flashed venom fixed from every tuft
And grassy mound, on him approaching there!
Then terror seized him and he gazed around;

His way-worn limbs and burning temples bid
Him onward look if nigh the cross he stood,
But dim was that from this unhallow'd glade.
And as to unclose the Book his trembling hand
Sought for its clasp, it weaker shook and failed,
Nor could his eyes find aught whereon to rest,
Unto those gliding serpents in his path
By fascination every moment drawn:
Now here I marked that he, who to destroy,
Had planned this deadly path in days of yore,
Lest one so far enticed, at this dread spot,
Might seek his guide discouraged, had disposed
On either hand a snare; two spacious bowers;—
One thickly intertwined and large within,
Dispelled the light of heaven, and on the cross
Turned its dense back; a cold and subtle den
Of present death and future, stored full well
With poisonous weeds and opiate drugs to seal
The sense in slumber: this is named the bower

Of Unbelief; the other decked, profuse
Of various flowers, told of pleasure wide,—
Of universal bliss,—a mockery
Of all around it and its votaries joy;
This did Unwise with frowning brow disdain,
And to the far-off East uplift his eyes,
But dull and heavy clouds rolled thick between
The once warm brilliance of those realms and him,
And downward sweeping veiled the glorious cross;
Nor East nor West was sight to cheer his gaze—
A wilful wanderer!—on high the sun
Fierce blazing downward, deep he heaved a sigh,
Then 'neath his feet laid down the Book, and passed,
With resolution dark and lip compressed,
The threshold of that bower, to death so dear,
Called Unbelief—the portals of the tomb;
And there I watched him wearily reclined,
Ere long in sleep fast bound, anon beheld
The fearful gestures of his evil dreams,

And all the proofs of that fell restlessness
Man cannot kill by slumber. What the frame
Of clay, to bind the giant power within,
Big with immortal knowledge, when it raves
Untiring there? its tyranny alone,
The mortal being's sure destruction proves.
He slept! he slept! and to the West drew on
The wearying day; nor did he see or fear
The peril that his troubled spirit saw,
And strove with supernatural power to him
Thus to communicate. "Unhappy one!
When shalt thou wake?" I cried, "Oh, when arise?
Ere night comes on? ere, hurried to the vale,
Its raging torrents loud before thee foam,
And thou, in wild tumultuous tempest lost,
Must onward go?" He slept! yes, still he slept!

* * * * *

Sleep has no balm, no downiest pillow is
Soft, for the fevered brow, whose aching throb

Would lose in sleep its madness: when the frame
Reposes, then the spirit does not rest
More than, when dust commingles with its dust,
The soul to ashes turns; continued life
Have both, or that continual state of woe
Inflicting torment on the body, toil
Interminable; and what then is that?
Can it a life be named, albeit it has
Cessation of existence none, which death is called,
Yet void of all that to the name of life
Adds good? it is that state of life far worse
Than death itself, whose victim may be said,
For ever in the bitterest pangs of death
Chained fast, thus ever dying, NEVER *dead!*
Sleep has no balm for him, to sleep, who flies
From horrors which increase around the while,
To which he soon must wake, and whose first thought
Must, waking, be of them, and earliest sense,
That of their presence and unblest demands.

No crimson streak of morn upon his couch,
Or heated pillow, when Unwise awoke,
Its cooling brightness threw; but haggard, wild,
I saw him rise, come forth, and gaze around;—
No sparkling river there, no flowers of bloom,
No mossy banks, or heavenly hills afar,
In distance beautiful, he saw; and ah!
No Book of shining page, no shelt'ring cross!
In the black West I saw the sun appear,
Half fall'n beneath the wailing, wide, green sea;
Still fiercely scowling on the clouds that sought
Too soon to quench him: lower now he sinks,
And dark they brood in counsel for a storm,
With shaggy brows o'erhung, in dark embrace
Of boding whispers chill; and then no more
I saw the sun; a sickly light the sky
Gave forth, for suddenly the West had seized
One latent torch, and winged it as a shaft:
Swift from its livid root aloft it sprang,

And, darting devious through the ambient gloom,
Lit all the aërial elements perplexed
With flaming fury, and to Heaven's heart
White 'neath his sable garments rent in twain,
Relentless quivered: then the wounded sky,
Shaken with strong and loud convulsions groaned,
From pole to pole, and on the stricken head
Of him o'ertaken shed its drops of blood,
Heavy and frequent; he, in fearful flight,
Ran here and there unconscious, and his face
Hid from the revelry of nature wild.

Much dreaded I the valley of the flood
Would soon receive him then; when through the glare
Of tempest on his path, a roll I saw
Coiled nigh the brink of a capacious pit,
At hand wide-gaping, down whose sides at times
From ledge to ledge fell forks of lightning red,
Each chasm lighting: here he stooped, to see

If that were some stray leaf by whirlwind driven
From his lost guide, and read with pallid fear
Its name Despair, and horrid counsel given,—
Deep in those caverns shelter to procure!
The clouds were cleft; a gust caught up the roll,
And flung it fiercely in his streaming face,
Damp with the chilly gore of murdered time!
Yet, at that direful moment, did he gain
Strength this to spurn, and as the severed worm,
By its own writhings shrinks from danger's way,
Crawled from the dungeon's opening brink in pain,
Then, powerless stretched, his bitter tones recalled
The rising morn and all, that fair and good,
He foolishly despised, and slept away;
Then blamed his folly and transgressions all,
And wept aloud. Now, as he wept, it seemed
That the destroying angel had refrained
To add his voice to that of some blest choir
Whose hallelujah swelled above the storm!

Again loud peals of heavy thunder rolled,
Drowning its harmony; but sudden flew
A vivid flash along the East,—lit up
A distant rock, and for an instant there
The Cross displayed! bright on its grassy height,
Untouched and fair; then all grew dark again.
New life into the frame of him laid low
Appeared to burst:—"Oh, if," he earnest cried—
"If that might yet be gained! Oh, Thou so bright!
Where now the guide Thou gavest me, or how
Thither to fly, I know not; all I know
Is misery extreme; here—even here
Once more to me, for mad presumption false
So justly stricken, that best Book reveal?"
On which I did behold a wondrous light
Come sailing through the far, far skies along;—
A Dove, whose silv'ry wings shed soft around,
Its path of flight, a glow as that which spreads
Through the thin vapour driv'n on starry night

Across the full moon's face, which, from the hills,
A shining track had left; its flight was stayed
O'erhead, where on the earth the suppliant knelt,—
The sodden earth,—and sweet refulgence cast
Upon his pale cold brow; then, gently down,
Its pinions stooped, attracting, as it flew,
The wand'rer on; entranced, but trembling still,
He followed, till, alighting suddenly,
Among the pages of his long-lost Book
It fluttered, and each letter bathed in light!
What joy was his! unto his heart he clasped
The prize, th' unspoken prize; then did a voice,
On thunder borne, loud bid him "up" and "on!"
From worst destruction; stumbling oft he flew:—
"Where was his pathway?" ask you; "had he found
The right, the living way?" Ah! that bright Dove
Did trace it with his pinions bright, and lead
Straight on and swiftly: clasping close the Book,
That radiant one he followed, faint but firm;

His feeble strength had failed to bear him on,
But oh! that glorious, glowing sight gave power
Beyond conception's might! and, nearing now
The rising rock, more strong it grew: yet here—
Here too, was danger rife; one moment then,
Shook the fierce skies with baffled wrath severe,
And shook the earth that yawned for him in vain
His heart beat loud, his trembling hand let go
The Book; but, hastily to grasp again
The falling treasure, both were wide outspread:
Swift time was short; *one* leaf alone torn forth,
That grasp retained, *but of the Cross it spake,*
Thus all was well! upon the Rock he sprang,
The everlasting Rock! when all things else
Rolled shattered into chaos; safe from thence
Beheld afar the suffering plains, the streams
Run red to cataracts of woe unknown;
The gaping pit, for ever crying, "Give,"
Gather creation's broken fragments in,

A flaming waste, and smoky columns hurled
From all its surface to the frowning sky:
Did he then shudder? Nay, why does yon tree
Skyward extend its scorched and naked arms?
Why rocks it so on earth's convulsive breast?
Does not the giant champion of the storm—
The veteran tempest, cruelly embrace
Those time-seared limbs, and with its mother earth
Drag for the mastery? the deed is done;
And from each wounded pore, the bleeding root
Is torn; then to the tyrant useless more
The whole vast bulk is hurled upon the soil;
But not a breath that one bright leaf has stirred,
Or shaken from the rose's fragrant bloom,
Which now the penitent delighted plucks,
One drop of early dew! as round the cross,
On which the shining Dove now rested white,
His arm was flung, and on its golden side,
His brow was pressed, and tears of joy he shed,

High o'er the vale, and beautifying all
With calm, surpassing beauty, I beheld
Clouds like the wings of angels, and a form
Whose fairness robed them all in stainless white,
Smiling on him below; as 'twere to say,
"Some there are here thou knowest; soon I come!"
These were the Eastern hills, but not beyond:
A little step, when rested there awhile,
He who was lost and found must higher go.

Now whilst I, thankful for his great escape,
Did bless the love which o'er this one had watched,
Methought his voice, so late in anguish raised,
Or spent in terror's whisper, thus exclaimed:—
"When thou, sweet Dove, at blush of dawn shalt fly;
When thou shalt upward soar to brighter realms,—
Regions where He who made this path for me
Hath homes prepared for such as weary are
Which Peace, my gentle Peace, has long enjoyed,

Waiting to bid me to its blissful joy
Glad welcome;—when thou there shalt soar, sweet
Dove,
Together travelling at that sunny hour,
We'll to the hills,—we'll to the heavenly hills."

* * * * *

Filled with the gentlest breathings of delight
Sent up from Eden's green, luxurious fields,
Did airy float a mist of heavenly birth;
Its essence music, soft and ravishing,
Now faint, now near: within it ceaseless roamed
Bright forms, whose voices of harmonious love
This music was, which as the airs of spring
Spread grateful round, in pairs or groups they passed.
There strayed a family; a sister here
Beside her brother walked. Now louder burst
The ethereal strain, and rapture filled my soul!
Light glorious beamed!—it was the morning sun,
The music ceased—I woke, it was a dream!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THOUGHTS

ON

A NEW-YEAR'S MORNING.

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."—*Ps.* xc. 1.

Arise, my soul! the burial shroud of night
Another year conceals,—for ever gone!
Wake to the call of Hope and purpose new,
Wrapt in the rising year, from depths unseen
That beckon on, and nerve for every toil.

First conscious breath that wakes the still profound
Of thought unstartled, waft to heaven a prayer,
On wings of Faith to Time's Creator borne,—
And thine immortal! future inhabitant
Of that Eternity His presence fills.

Now swift as dawn, and as his shooting rays
Far multiplied diffuse, do thoughts return
Of things which have been, and shall be no more,
For good or evil fixed or unfulfilled.
Methinks beside an ancient tree I stand;
Wide spread its branches bare, and chill o'erhung,
Where Thames thro' rural meads his stately flood
Rolls on, content to bless these scenes of peace,
Nor court the busier crowded haunts of men.
Here Friendship and Instruction sweet combined
Charms every shade, and sounds in every wave
A second music lovelier than its own,

Part of my being! not forgetful now
As once,—too blest,—to shut these eyes on all—
This heart on peace—if gratitude most due
To God and man engrossed not all thy joy.
Here let me rest beneath this wintry shade,
As stealing twilight smooths the ruffled tide;
Eve should foretell repose, yet no soft rest
Joyous I hail as all things round me do,
From troublous turmoil free, and losing self
With all its wants, in meditative praise,
Still busy Self distracts the general peace:
So stands amid the forest's quivering pines,
In richest green arrayed, the lifeless tree,
Blest in no season, as they slow revolve,
With garment vernal; and whilst far and near,—
As thro' their midst aërial breathings creep,—
Each other bough its every leaf employs
To swell the gentle harmony of all,
His creaking branches ceaselessly repine,

And spread their melancholy woes abroad.
Swift time rolls on, and welcome changes come,
Of place and scene, yet never strange or new,
Since there the truant eye, with reason fond,
Of watchful mem'ry dwelt when morn and eve,
With light and shadow marked the gliding days.
Oh Hills endear'd! Ye vales of Cambria, hail!
'Twere hard without applause to gaze on thee,
Trembling to meet the earliest glance of spring,
His tenderest voice, and with a blush be won!
There silv'ry Usk, by many a dear retreat
Of humming shade, reluctant holds his way;
Or listens charmed, in some grove-darkened dell,
To lone Seclusion's sigh, where willows weep;
Oh, favoured stream! the music of thy flow
Is soft as recollection born of thee;
As varied all — as full of ling'ring love
Low whispering to the woods its fairy tale;
For oft thy murmurs melancholy fall,

When through the deepening twilight, plaintive sounds
The ringdove's coo from out his hushed retreat,
Or night surrounds the neighb'ring hills with gloom.
Hand of the Past! now lead me soft again,
Where once I sat at moonlit hour alone;—
The place of many graves: few deem when there
Of higher worth the pleasures of an hour,
Than Duty's glorious, best, divine reward!
A solemn sight! scarce half one straggling ray
Can gild the cold dark side of any grave,
So close they throng! but on th' engraven stone,
Falls broad and pale, to teach the grief of some,
The hope of others, and the end of all:
Nay—not the end on earthly mould inscribed,
Or written there or read,—its type alone;
He who of old on Patmos' isle was cast,
Saw where 'twas writ, and heard its wonders read
By Majesty Most High, as shall be done,

Whilst Heaven and Earth and Hell, with all they hold,
Silent attend thro' all the vast of space.
Now spread the sails—my native land, adieu!
What infant song, what feeble accents thee
Shall speak beloved, and wing the thoughts they would?
Faint falls the light on Albion's mist-clad cliffs,
Where, far and faint along the winding strand,
Low-glimmering lights soft smile a sweet farewell,—
And all around is revelry and sea!—
How blest is he who, being born to die,
Is "born again" to live when death is past,
Immortal conqueror of mortal ills!
His the possession of unshaken peace,
Seal of its truth, and Life's eternal spring;
His the kind solace of a Father's care
From parent far, an elder brother's aid
And counsel wise, when, wandering long, he dreams
Of Home forsaken, or at times recalls

A brother's voice, or sister's sunny smile;
And more the living comforts of his soul,
His sense of being and enduring changed,
Bright treasures incorruptible above,
Sure as the throne of Heaven; for oft when there
His hands he lifts and "Abba, Father," cries,
Through all creation seems a voice to say,
"Son, ever with me, *all* I have is thine!"
But twilight gathers now, and near the vale
Of Death's cold shade, where all his trust's assailed,
Struck with the bolts of Hell, but not dismayed
In utter ruin or tumultuous flight:
Still on the Christian goes, the "rod and staff"
Him solace there, his Saviour's arm sustains!
Perchance some steadfast pilgrim, strong in faith,
Deems e'en the taste of Jordan's water sweet,
As soft its music lulls him to repose!
The flood rolls by: upon the blissful brink,
Bereft of sin, bereft of self, he stands:

On either side one shining seraph waits;
Each, silent, meditates on Love divine,
Or courts his first acclaims of pure delight,
With hints celestial or with harps of love.
Now to the gates of pearl upborne they rise,
And raptures inconceivable within,
On Zion's hill and round the throne prepared:—
Such was sweet matter of rejoicing thought
At noon or silent eve, or when the lull
Of heavy night mute listened to the waves
Roll dirge-like round, and melancholy moan
"Deep unto deep;" then oftentimes would come
One who would whisper "It is I!"—'twas He
At midnight on the darksome billows walked
Of Galilee's rough tide; blest messenger
Of peace as then, whom "winds and seas obey:"
Perchance at intervals a sound would rise
Of hearty praise unburdened, or of prayer,
Anxious as that, on Peniel's plain, which craved

At dawn a benediction,—Israel's plea.
Adieu, ye days of endless life the spring!
Long shall I think of thee, both when I roam
Far in the strangers' land, or home I love;
Why not when in that blest abiding Home
"Not made with hands, eternal in the sky?"

SYMPATHY.

AN ODE.

Clear Harp, whose nightly murmurs spread
  Melodious through the sacred shade,
Where pensive Sorrow oft has shed
  Fast tears, to none beside betrayed;
If Nature knows thy soothing call,
  And answers to th' Eolian sweep,—
Why not those strains as sweetly fall
On mortal bosom, and bid all
  Its warm affections weep?

Oh gifts of Earth, from chaos rude
  Uplifted by th' Eternal's hand!—
Oh Earth, of chaos formed, how good—
  How great—how beautiful ye stand!
How each on each serenely smile!
  How tune the universal song,
That peals thro' Nature's temple aisle
One-voiced, till on her funeral pile
  Falls voiceless every tongue!

Oh thou, for whom their fairest all
  Smiles sweetest, wakes the heavenliest lay,
How dark the treachery of that fall
  Which made thee cease to love as they!
His due Hosannas cease to raise,
  High seated on the Eternal throne
Of unreached glory, and, with praise,
To share, thro' all thine earthly days,
  His spotless gifts, as one.

Inspire my lay, O soul of Love!
From fallen man to brother given:
Essence of Him who sways above
The sceptre of adoring Heaven!
Once pure thro' all this world of old,
When far Euphrates' banks, and rare
Havilah, round whose soil of gold
Encircling Pison proudly rolled,
Stretched under Eden fair;—

And stainless 'neath th' approving smile
Which sealed the word that spake them good;
Ere harboured they the serpent's wile,
Or brother spilt a brother's blood.—
Hence, theme unblest!—thee, valleys sweet —
Rocks, rising hills and buzzing groves,
I sing, by sin's still doubting feet
Unbrushed, unstartled by the greet
Of any voice but Love's.

On Earth's fair face no fallen tree
Has torn the forest's turfy floor;
No shipwreck o'er the spacious sea
Is scattered to the sounding shore.
Ah! beauteous form,—whate'er thou be,—
Glad animate with heavenly breath
Thro' all thy radiant frame, to thee
Death's but a name—thou ne'er didst see
The pale, cold form of Death!

Thou hast not felt the rankling dart
That cleft in twain the cord it left;
That empty hollowness of heart
Of all it loved, by time bereft,
But, vocal with the general Spring,
Dost lift the obedient anthem high
At Phœbus' earliest sign, nor fling
The lyre away, when twilight's wing
Is waved across the sky.

Responsive harp, be joy thy theme,
O'er-pass the ages of the past,
And all that gloomy troubled dream
From which a world is waked at last.
From Life to Life, o'er Death's loud flood,
A bridge suspend;—from Eden high
Where Eve, ere yet the fatal food
She tasted, Hope's fair emblem stood,
To night-veil'd Calvary.

There may the weeping wonderer hear
Of blissful Paradise regained;
First Eden's sentence dark and drear
Made portal to a better land.
"Remember me, my dying Lord,"
Is all the suff'ring sinner's prayer,
"When to thy kingdom fair restored;"—
"To-day"—Immanuel's gladdening word—
"Shalt thou be with me there!"

Hail, voices blest of Him who gave
  Example holiest, purest, best;
Low murmuring o'er a kinsman's grave,
  To give some aching spirit rest;
There breathes thy spell as that whose strain
  First sought the hills of Salem nigh,
"Thy brother"—friend—"shall rise again;"
It soothes of every heart the pain
  As hers of Bethany.

He too has wept;—for whom?—Behold,
  Sad eye by sore affliction proved,
(Not all as did the Jews of old,)
  The lonely weepers how He loved!
He loved thy lost one, and hath led
  His soul where flowers unfading grow;
He loves the mourners, and hath said
How precious are the tears they shed,
  By His own sacred woe.

'Tis love unselfish that must bind
The bleeding wound, and soothe its pain,
And the same bond, in grief entwined
Can make two hearts no longer twain;
Oh, who can tell with careless voice
What the first thrill of pleasure deep,
Approving his determined choice
"To joy with them that do rejoice,
And weep with them that weep!"

They *will* be rich who now are poor,
And those be comforted who mourn;
As Lazarus to the rich man's door,
To beg the uneaten morsels, borne.
And if no other cause compel,
'Twere well their woes on earth to share,
With them in equal bliss to dwell
In heaven's courts, nor see from hell
Their envied pleasures there.

In fair prosperity of heart
Be't ours to soothe ungentle care;
Those blessings which the blest impart
Their tasted virtues with them bear.
Oft as a sigh from desert drear,
When like distresses lurk within,
That voice, which meant to soothe and cheer,
Low falters with a trickling tear
Of things which might have been;—

And shall the bubble, lifted high
Where mountain billows awful form,
Ask wherefore ocean swells? or why
The rending heavens are racked with storm?
Or ocean's self less mighty, found
Upon the universal sea
Of ordered things, whose only bound
The Wisdom that enclasps them round,
Ask, why should these things be?

This from all finite knowledge shields
Too great conceptions for the soul,
As through all time those icy fields
That gather lasting round the pole;
Once entered there, canst thou retain
An only life, to breathe alone?
And shall thy mental vision vain
E'er overreach, one step to gain
In that untraversed zone?

Thus joy should still untiring seek
For sorrow, half its gifts to share;
The fickle dealings of a week
May cloud its smiles with cruel care.
Be't that the mourner never rise
To kiss the hand that eased his pain;
The smile that lights his closing eyes
Shall be a sevenfold costlier prize
Than all the worldling's gain!

* * * * *

Borne back through vanished ages long,
Around my path like spectres rise
The states and battlements of song,
Their orators and warriors wise.
Pale Luna's beams at distance fall
O'er many a vestige, dimly cast,
Of crumbling column, giant wall,
That speaks in hollow accents all
The Carthage of the past.

These all are lost, his form to see
Who sits a stony figure there;
Content in solitude to be
Where it were second life to share;—
To share disgrace that both might gain
New glory, could her fallen throne
Stir all his heart to feel a pain
For others' sorrows prostrate lain,
Not wholly for his own.

There might the exiled Roman find
The memory of departed days
Fall lightly on the monarch mind,
That rules the ruin it surveys.
There from its tombs and ashes great,
Beneath the solemn midnight moon,
A prouder Carthage might create,
And, leaving thought of former state,
With Hannibal commune!

But ruined Self compelled thee lone,—
Ambition's and thy rival's toy,—
Where every spectacle makes known
How man may man's best work destroy,
Yea, ruined Self; now see thee led
In fiercer power to Rome again:
Hear, hear the wailing o'er the dead;
The streets with human gore are red,
The houses filled with slain.

'Tis thus th' unhumbled despot feels
His people's wants — his country's need ;
And thus in costly sheath conceals
The sword that makes that country bleed.
Such deeds are his whose heart had been
Best pleased its like distress to find ;—
A towerless base whereon to lean,—
Where every trace was fittest seen
Some ruin of the mind.

More noble he who, deeming woe
Hung o'er Athenia's spotless fame,
Brought counsel to his bitterest foe,—
Death daring ; well "the Just" his name :
And Salamis, with his, thy name,
Unmixed with guile, through time shall be
The secret traitor's open shame,
The record of sublimest fame,
The spell of Sympathy.

Love—love thy friend; but also "love
Thine enemy,"—Divine command!
Where'er thou dwellest or dost rove;
Thy neighbour, or thy native land,
So their prosperity shall thrill
Untasted pleasures thro' thy soul;
And still unaltering—loving still—
Ye'll have at length one joy, one will,
And share one glorious whole!

Oh pardon, Thou! whose heavenly tone
Doth teach me, while I weary roam
Beneath, I cannot pass alone
Along the waves that waft me home:
Still pardon that which is not Thine,
And perfect that which is begun;
Let Thy blest will alone be mine,
And all I do—intend—design—
Be to Thy glory done!

The things of Time and Sense appear
In truest light, severe or kind;
That nothing earthly steal the care
Intended for the immortal mind.
Nor folly, I had counted wise,
For Earth, if all its gifts it gave,
Ere barter Life; Time's goodliest prize
Must soon rest, hidden from these eyes,
Above the covered grave.

To Thy great name my thankful voice
It loudest anthems still shall raise;
Nor lonely sorrow, or rejoice,
Nor lonely pray, nor lonely praise.
And Thou, who knowest all the ways
Of those whose hearts are sorely riven,
Teach them all earthly bliss decays,
And be thro' everlasting days
Their bright and tearless heaven!

A REVERIE.

They loved — but sorrow clouded o'er
The early sunshine of their love;
And altered hopes, and trouble sore,
Shattered what Time could ne'er remove;

They changed the bright endearing smile,
Which he, who oft had seen it, deemed
That strange and fascinating wile
Which shaped his fancies while he dreamed.

Tears followed smiles (how oft they do,—
All know it; none pronounce it strange;
Yet, knowing it, alas how few
Rejoice, anticipating change!)

Reality is stern when past,
And robbed of all that made it fair;
A frowning outline, cold and vast—
An empty void alone is there.

They loved,—the tears they often shed
Were tears of joy, yet still *were* tears;
And as they fell it seemed they said,—
"Earth's joys are only joyous fears."

Strange sorrow-joy—to hope and feel
A something bright may be in store,
Which months and even days may steal,
And leave all gloomier than before.

They loved,—but tempests rose and chased
The beams from love's affrighted sky;
Yet earth alone these storms defaced—
It all grew bright, at last, on high.

They saw the fields, which late outspread
So beauteous, desolate and bare;
They wept above the rose's bed,
For half-blown buds hung blighted there.

They saw the home,—Ah! all to tell
Were sad as that forgotten scene,
Or echoes of the last farewell,
With broken voice, and sobs between,—

"'Twas only earth those storms defaced,
It all at last grew bright on high,"
And from the dark and dismal waste
Upturned to heaven the tearful eye.

They loved;—forget the sad, sad tale
Which clouded o'er their early love;
O'er blighted prospects draw the veil
'Twixt thee and heaven, and look above.

There is a land — a fair, fair land—
From change and sorrow far removed,
Where still they wander hand in hand,
And angels whisper still "they loved!"

THE YEW-TREE'S SHADE.

"Beneath those rugged elms, that Yew-tree's shade."
GRAY'S *Elegy*.

IN MEMORIAM.

DOMAINS of Silence! here, in deep repose,
Lie hushed the ills, th' inconstancies of Time;
Nor strife, to strew the daily path with woes,
Can haunt the footsteps as they heav'nward climb:
Here has Bereavement long-enduring knelt,
Returned to see the roses bloom and fade,
Here watched the winter's dreary mantle melt,
And grass grow green, beneath the Yew-tree's shade.

Chill o'er the turf hangs many a drooping bough,
With kindly care, its soft and solemn cloud;
As many mourners darken Death's cold brow,
And shield the pallid bareness of his shroud,—
A dark-green canopy,—and far beneath
Floats on the music of a light cascade,
No more to rapture with melodious breath
Their hearts who slumber 'neath the Yew-tree's shade:

Nor ever may the song terrestrial move,
Or gaudy glitter of a world of show,
Where sound the ecstasies of heavenly love,
Where crystal floods thro' fields celestial flow.
No sad complaint may pass the gate of peace,
Where, loosed at length, life's heavy load is laid:
Thus far they come,—and here for ever cease,—
All pain and labour, 'neath the Yew-tree's shade.

There is a tomb where waves the wild flower free,
And fragrant blooms, beside a marble stone,
Upreared where one wide-spreading, ancient tree,
Sighs over Youth's cold sepulchre alone,
No stranger bough disturbs its pensive form,
Where oft his more than youthful fancy strayed;
Its vigil shields that fair tomb from the storm,
And guards the slumberer with a Yew-tree's shade.

Dear friend, how silent, sacred, is the scene!—
Thy grassy bed, beneath that chosen tree
Whose branches ever-grieving, ever-green,
Wave o'er thy resting-place, and weep for thee.
Yet better there to bend o'er Friendship's bier,
Than midst the world, for love sincere betrayed,
To drop unrecognised a bitter tear,
Too sad and earthly for this holy shade.

A HISTORICAL PICTURE ON THE BANKS OF THE WYE.

"Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay."
GRAY'S *Bard.*

OLD Piercefield now looks proudly down, the deep-
rolled waters o'er
Where winding Wye shall glide along through
Slaughter's vale no more:
From crag to crag no warrior shout awake her cliff-
girt side,
Rise on the roar of wint'ry storm, or summer's
peace deride:
Dull kite, upborne above the wood on slow convulse-
less wing,
Nor kestrel startles in his cave, to hear the weapons
ring;

But oft at eve, in hollow wail of solitary woe,
The night-owl hoots his dark applause at day's
departed glow.

Here doth the conscious river, nigh unto its future
home,
Forget swift Youth's more sparkling course, content
sedate to roam,
Much as the thought-directed flow of life's maturer
day,
When deep Eternity appears not very far away.
Primæval grandeur, purpled wood, and giddy step-
less height,
Of shelving rock stoop shadowy o'er with ancient
moss bedight,
But well I ween that mansion grey, the monarch of
the glen,
Sees all effaced the transcript fell of red ambition's
pen.

Ye days of Cambrian chivalry! your nursery was song,
It flowed commixed with princely blood the burning veins along,
Each pulse-throb flung the rapture forth from some deep-hidden string,
Each heart-beat taught some chieftain-bard of former fame to sing!
Ye days of Cambrian chivalry! that lyre had better been
Beneath the flow of angry Wye than on its banks of green,
Whose last wild note a bitter wail adown the current flung—
A slave's the hand which tore its chords, and chains the theme they sung.

The chieftain is to battle gone, the lady to her bower,
To sigh and weep in solitude at twilight's stilly hour;

From ether blue the stars look bright upon this
world below,
As all like them should sighless be, and ever smiling
glow.
In Rhuddlan's battlemented walls does England's
monarch stay,
Exulting in his brighter hopes till dawn of early day;
Exulting to have learnt at length Llewellyn and his
train
Their mountain-fastnesses have left to meet him on
the plain.

There is a murmur, as the sea heaves off its troubled
breast,
When muttering gales begin to lift the billow from
its rest;
To gather in its masses slow, embodied soon to rise,
A pillared waterspout of death into the howling
skies:

There is a murmur hurried on throughout the Briton ranks,
A wrathful, anguish-stricken groan on Wye's tumultuous banks;
And many a lip, to pain compressed, drives on the joyless sound,—
Llewellyn lies, and long shall lie, upon the stainèd ground!

Urge! Mortimer, the day is thine! What! dar'st not know it yet?
In truth not easily thy fears old Snowdon's broils forget!
But Nature here refuses more her barriers to allow,
To splinter back the steel-bound darts thy skilful archers throw.
Llewellyn! there is death, alas, this day to more than thee,
And they who live but long to die, they live not to be free!

Say, heard'st thou, with a duller ear than was thy
wont of yore,
What wail arose to know that thou hadst fall'n to
rise no more?

Say, didst thou, half in slumber see, that flash of steel
on high,
As lifts the bleeding eagle's wing ere vigourless it lie?
The Saxon mass as on they rushed, like giant's tot-
tering frame,
Hurled back; for blighting was the scorch of Hope's
expiring flame;
Then didst thou to repose recline ere yet a glimmer-
ing fell
Upon that sudden torch, a tale of coming gloom to
tell;
Nor learn at length the bitter truth,—thine ancient
line was o'er,
As lord of Cambria's beauteous hills, and vales, and
rivers more?

The sun is red on Severn's wave, far blushing to his beam,
And red with an unearthlike red on Wye's blood-weeping stream!
Grey Cader Idris far away has caught the spreading wail,
And dark Plinlimmon's torrents sob to night's impassioned gale!
And there are gatherings, chill, forlorn, on Arvon's sea-damp sand,
Of those whose strength no more can prop their falling fatherland;
For few are they, and most are scarr'd, their faces deadly white,
Look terrible through moonlight pale, a spectral scene of night.

Behold, the seers' white streaming locks wild strew the solemn air,

For hoary sage and minstrel hold their last assembly there;
No sounding harpstring's echo falls, a hero's deeds to tell
To all the listening rocks around, as formerly it fell.
There is a gentle, lonely sigh, in moonlit myrtle bower,
A dimness crossing beauty's eye at twilight's stilly hour;
But no endearing tale is near to change that weary sigh,
No winding horn upon the hills to brighten up that eye!—

Now rests no stained, no war-torn sod, on Wye's soft banks of green;
For years have passed, and stol'n the trace of that which once has been:

The merle's sweet madrigal is heard at morning's earliest hour;
There springs the white anemone, the woodland's cherished flower:
Nor ever is there discord dark amid the mountain's rife—
When brother meets with brother there, there are no words of strife;
No memory of those distant days, that bitter blood-stained feud,
Their fathers knew, less blest than they, in darker ages rude.

Sweet Severn, of Plinlimmon birth, her native land to bless,
First tastes the pleasures of that land, her Cambria's kind caress;
Then bears the beauties of those hills along a flowery bed,

Where lovely Albion's valleys bright are by their
virtues fed :
Thus ever with her sister stream, the rich romantic
Wye,
May winter's storms their bosoms fan as summer
evening sigh ;
Still peace adorn the gentle banks their shining
waters lave,
Harmonious resting on the brink, harmonious in the
cave.

TO BRECON.

Written at Sea.

Sweet vale! no voice of Ocean e'er
Thy still retirement knew;
No sea-storm lurks in sullen lair
Amid thy mountains blue;—
Loved Brecon, absent from the gaze
That billows bound for me,
How oft the flight of memory strays
Instinctive back to thee!

Borne swift across the briny waste,
Back to some sheltering wood,
Where, winding green, thy vale is traced
By Usk's transparent flood,—
Bright Usk ! the woodland shade at eve,
When sunset rays divide,
Smiles, as their latest beam they leave
Upon thy golden tide.

There yet will ling'ring wishful rest
One Time-existing ray,
Waiting to die upon thy breast,
When life's full beams decay :
Thus, hastening on, sometimes a flower
Beside our path we find,
Which leaves not at its fading hour
But beauty's blight behind.

A SISTER'S VOICE.

"But thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet, as if a sister's voice reproved."
BYRON.

How often on my heedless ear,
In days gone by, that gentle tone
Had fallen soft; but ah! though near
The words were breathed, I did but hear,—
Not half they meant was known!

Now, stealing o'er the moonlit wave
With the wild music of the sea,
Lost words from many an early grave,
Words which a gentle sister gave,
Come sadly back to me.

I close mine eyelids, and I stand
Where no deep billows roll around,
For in my childhood's far-off land
I seem to clasp her soft white hand,
And listen to the sound.

I weep not when they rest again
Upon the wide unvaried sea,
Or sigh, remembering how vain
The music of the murmuring main
'Twixt that loved land and me.

For Heaven's calm light upon the deep,
So oft by cruel tempests driven,
Forbids me, while those tempests sleep,
And starry worlds shine bright, to weep;—
And thou didst speak of Heaven.

May angels, loved one, softly say,
Whilst thou art sleeping, "Do not fear—
Thy brother, though he's far away,
Still loves, while billows round him play,
His sister's voice to hear."

THE CASCADE.

Under the darkening bridge it ran,
Into the sunshine swift and bright,
And there its fairy sport began,
Leaping from off the giddy height:
Young primroses, to see the sight,
Looked up in pretty groups and smiled;
And the wild woodland's fav'rite child,
The delicate anemone,
Its perilous descent to see
Grew pale, and trembled with affright.

It sparkled in the May-morn sun,
Shooting its silver arrows round;
Rested, and then more wildly run,
Enraptured by its own sweet sound:
O'er many a devious ledge it wound
Its moss-paved path, and crooked fall,
Admired and wondered at by all:
No overshadowing turf, to gain
A lightening kiss, hung o'er in vain
Betwixt the bridge and level ground.

One instant—*but* one instant—there,
With mute and glowing smile it stood,—
Trembled at what itself could dare,
And wandered on in thoughtful mood,
Down-winding through the solemn wood:
On either velvet side was spread
A varied carpet, and its bed

Smooth pebbles formed; in this retreat
Soft sounds of Naiads' tiny feet
Oft fall, or wood-nymphs whispers brood.

And here sometimes, when all around,
And in the lofty boughs, is still,
Nor near or far is heard a sound
Except the tinkling of the rill,
A breath from summer skies will fill
The clustering leaves, and gently shake
The flow'rets sleeping in the brake,
Then murmur while the mavis sings,
And all the wakened valley rings,
Strange tales, which all their bosoms thrill.

There came a stranger to these halls,
In beautiful disguise, when bright
The May-sun sparkled on the falls,
And all things wondered at the sight;

They said that morning, that the light
Looked through the branches wond'rous fair,—
They laughed, but nothing else was there:
She came all beautiful,—and still
Her voice is in the sparkling rill,
Sweet, heavenly music, day and night.

May 4, 1860.

THE POETRY OF PEACE.

"Mercy and truth are met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—*Ps.* lxxxv. 10.

A CONSCIENCE basking in the smile of Heaven,
Whose noonday sun is holiness and love,
Glad in the consciousness of sins forgiven
And justice satisfied, can rise above
Earth's trifles and earth's cares, and cast below
A look of peace ineffable : but so
Is that clear conscience made of Christ's pure mind
A blest partaker, that ere long the woe,
Darkening a world to its own interests blind,
Shrouds the bright spirit's radiance, and with Him
Who over Salem wept, the eye of peace grows dim.

Immortal being! who are they all fair,
The limit of whose sight is perfect bliss?—
They've reached the heavenly world, and, happy there,
Have ceased to weep for misery in this;
Not one inhabitant their eyes behold
Without a robe of white, or crown of gold.
This, then, is peace ineffable, but far
Beyond the earthly, as those things untold
Which fancy paints beyond experience are
In real life; but how can thought increase
Or fancy paint the bounds of perfect, lasting peace?

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

Not to the sandy beach, where yesterday
You walked and talked, do you return to find
The footprints of a friend now far away,—
Waves have rolled there and left no trace behind:
Not in the hollow moanings of the wind
Come back the voices which afar it bore;
Another pathway is to thee assigned,
Thine inmost heart's recesses to explore,
There to behold his form, and hear his voice once more.

There something heard and treasured quick recalls
The tone in which 'twas uttered, and again,
Fresh on the fancy as at first, it falls,
Bringing its first amount of joy or pain;
No accent there an entrance sought in vain,
Or like a solitary echo came,
Which for an instant only can remain;
For there, distinct to mem'ry as his name,
He stands whose words they were, as when he spake
—the same.

This is the book where they who come and go
Leave here and there a trace, and nothing more,
Not soon effaced by Time's impetuous flow,
As faint impressions on the sandy shore;
And here the forms which you have seen before
Of absent friends, or friends long passed away,
Some hasty line first faintly will restore,
And then the thought more perfectly pourtray,
Showing you how they passed their little earthly day.

Then you, who may these varied pages turn,
Let not dull thoughtlessness make vain your toil,
Or rude contempt, your nobler wish to learn
The simplest truths, with tone sarcastic spoil:
For loveliest flowers bedeck the lowliest soil,
And depths of forest unexplored perfume,
Far from the busy world's perpetual broil,
Making a Paradise of earthly gloom,
And beautifying e'en the precincts of the tomb.

1860.

THE MIRAGE.

A Fragment.

Far o'er Sahara's waste the pilgrim's eye
Measures his labour's dread futurity;
But far or near, to soothe his anguish keen,
No palmy foliage specks the hazy scene,—
When all at once his filmy eyes behold
A lucid lake across th' horizon rolled.
"Sweet hope!" he cries; "begone, despairing thought!
How kind the toil this matchless hour that brought!
There, from the basin of some crystal pool,
These parching lips shall sip the liquid cool;
My sandals loosed, these wayworn feet shall lave
Their burning wounds beneath the glassy wave.

Ye'll soon be there, my trembling steps," he cries;
"Yet, oh! how distance mocks these aching eyes!
How want deceives! What giddy languor dim
Sickens my soul, and makes my senses swim."

Borne onward still by false excitement wild,
Reels on his tortured way the desert child;
With gaze transfixed, that swims but wavers not,
Turned on his all of hope—that watery spot:—
Unequal combat! but at length content—
Its cruel rage to taunt his misery spent—
The misty lake, unwilling yet to stay
Its fearful work accomplished, fades away;
His childhood's dread, the false mirage he knows,
Thinks on the unreached shrine, forgets his woes,—
In one long-holden, unattended breath
Pours forth his soul, and shuts his eyes in death!

* * * *

THE STORMY PETREL.

The tempest blast, careering wild,
Whirls high the scattered spray;
Yet mark yon Ocean's storm-nursed child
Above the billow play:—
So sports o'er Time's tempestuous sea,
When torn by winds of care,
Some young affection fond and free
That has been nurtured there.

THE SECRET OF CONTENT.

THERE are in this our earthly sphere
Some lowly paths to wisdom dear,
Whose tuneful shades and arbours rare
For more unpleasing scenes prepare,
Which hush the ruder passion's strife
Ere heightened by the ills of life,
And bid the heart its love extend
To those whose steps may never tend
On toil's rough road, to peace or joy,
Or rest, so absent from alloy.
And there is many a lowly cot
Where envy's voice has sounded not,

Or fierce ambition's brand severe
Lit all most sacred and most dear;
To raise before a selfish world
A flame, whose last mad column, hurled
High as the rapid meteor's flame,
Sinks into nothingness or shame,
The ember-smoke of earthly fame.
How dear is such a cottage home!
There never hard misfortunes come,
Save such as chasten hopes too wild
For Nature's loved but humble child;
And teach th' untutored rustic's mind
How sorrow's self to him is kind.
In some secluded hamlet, seen
Deep in the woodland valley green,
The early, wayward flower to tend,
The sprig new sprouting timely bend;
To fit the growing mind to bear
Harsh storms of trouble and of care;

To point the pathway where the view
Slow climbs some mountain prospect blue,
And dark ravines of danger thread
The pass all mortal footsteps tread,—
Oh, this is heaven-approved employ,
The seed of an immortal joy!
Thy locks, thou honoured master, may
Say, "we have grown too early grey,"
And speak of spring delights which fled
Like wintry shadows o'er thine head;
Perchance those solemn lips may move
A sentence to departed love;—
'Tis but the vanity of thought
By thee so oft, so truly taught;
Still faithfully thy part fulfil,
With constant, unrepining will;
The crown that all thy labour ends
For all will make a just amends:
Perchance when feebleness and age

That vision dims, those floods assuage
Which often told, when brimming o'er,
The tales that others share no more,
The filling eye, the husky tone
Which spake of sorrows not thine own,
And Time's rude hand has snatched from the.
The lightning dart of mirthful glee;
Then shalt thou smile for joy to hear
How some fair boy to mem'ry dear,
The subject of thy watchful toil,
Reared in this undistinguished soil,
Has lived to yield his cultured mind
A store of blessings to mankind.
He too shall to an end attain
Surpassing all of earthly gain,
Who, lost amid the busy throng
That moves life's crowded course along,
Lost to the loving eyes whose care
Must cease to watch his footsteps there,

And filled with all affection's fears
Return to solitude and tears;—
Yes, he is blest, who thus resigned,
Deems it his chief concern to bind
Around his heart those bonds of truth
That guided all his earliest youth;
Resolved to cherish and defend
Each sacred relic to the end:
For these shall lead to genuine peace,
Increasing with the mind's increase,
When urged amid the boisterous crowd
To deeds they never had allowed,
He hears, above the unhallow'd din
That rises from the ranks of sin,
Celestial music softly roll
Its rapture o'er his wavering soul;
Bid all his latent powers arise,
To hail assistance from the skies,
Which gives him perfect victory

O'er all the hosts of infamy.
Oh! if on life's dim, chequered way,
Where truth is sober, falsehood gay,
'Tis wisdom eager to pursue
Perfection of all beauty true,
More glorious aim unbinds the soul
From fascination's cursed control;
Leads up to Pisgah's topmost height
And points to Canaan's fields of light;
Bids him despise the flowery ease
On pleasure's painted couch he sees,
Disdainful driv'n to court the pain,
Which fools, and none but fools, disdain;
Conducts him at the hour of rest,
In midnight's rustling mantle dressed,
With gentle voice and noiseless tread,
To his accustomed grassy bed,
On cold damp stones to lay his head:
For there the vision he'll behold

In which his life-long tale is told,
From earth into the opening skies
All bright the angel staircase rise,
Its summit the Eternal's throne,
Each midway resting-place his own:
And there, when morning's misty beam
Disperses all the heavenly dream,
His faith of that stone pillow raise
An altar to Jehovah's praise—
Praise for so bright a picture given
Of his own shining path to heaven.

"THE DAYS THAT ARE GONE."

"That bower and its music I never forget;
But oft when alone, in the bloom of the year,
I think is the nightingale singing there yet:
Are the roses still bright by the calm Bendemeer?"

Lalla Rookh.

WHERE is that spot where at daylight's decline
The shadows of memory lightly shall fall;
Like the star of the evening unsullied to shine
Through life's multiplied visions the brightest of all?
Who'll seek it where sadness and changes, a cloud,
O'er the earliest sunbeams of pleasure have drawn;
Or deem that another so fair is allowed
As the first of the many bright days that are gone?

Home of my heart! if thy rocks and thy streams,
Thy mountains and valleys, mine ever could be,
I had fancied, to sweeten the rest of my dreams,
That all earth was a garden of roses like thee;
As the cloud that is gilded when passing the moon,—
There only those tints can its vapours adorn,
For it floats into darkness and vanishes soon,—
Is life's first golden vapour the days that are gone:

Yet still whilst the sunshine of summer is strong,
And the arbours of spring-tide are flowerless and few,
I'll think on the groves that are bursting with song,
And the buds of the valley all dripping with dew,
And lost in th' Elysium of shade that they bring,
Fly back to the beauties and blossoms of morn;
While the air that is burning around me shall ring
With the voice of my song to the days that are gone.

A REQUEST.

Whenever Prayer directs your eyes
Where parted spirits meet — above,
Seek far away beyond the skies
For him you love.

There is a hope when absence whelms
These bosoms that too oft despond;
It pierces yonder azure realms,
And looks beyond:

For not in vain — to end unseen —
The race of being bears us on; —
The beaten course has trodden been
In ages gone.

Well Folly might the steps attend
Of him who speeds to goal unknown ;
Who feels not if he reach the end
He'll gain a crown.

Onward we press from Death to Birth
Of lasting Life ; a span is given
For strife ; the starting point is earth,
The goal is heaven !

The breast may ache in contest swift,
The heart may palpitate for rest :—
On ! seize the prize ! not throbs its gift,
Or aching breast.

The journey is but short at last,
Then pain will nothing grievous seem,
Or as review'd, when sleep is past,
A troubled dream :—

Oh! then, when Prayer directs your eyes
Where parted spirits meet—above,
Seek far away beyond the skies
For him you love!

A PROMISE.

As oft toward the heavenly hill
Each fond desire, on wings of air,
Ascends, thy name shall waken still
The sweetest music there!

Fair as the shades, that even sends,
Flush crimson o'er the sunset sea,
Each cloud of sorrow soft that blends
With sunny thoughts of thee:

The light of Hope which stedfast burns,
Beyond, is as that Arctic ray
Which, ere its glory's set, returns
And changes night to day.

Oceans may separate, and years
As drear and stormy sever wide,—
Sorrows, and joys, and hopes, and fears,
Like shadows through them glide:

But, through the loudest tempest borne,
Shall Memory's whisper, sweet and mild,
Come o'er the gloomy waste forlorn
Of thousand billows wild:

Till years have hushed to calm repose
This longing heart's uncertain strife,
And sorrow scarce a shadow throws
Upon the sea of life;

Then patient trust, refined by days
Of lonely watchfulness and care,
Shall welcome with a song of praise
The answer to its prayer.

"REQUIESCAT IN PACE."

LINES WRITTEN ON VISITING THE GRAVE OF SIR H. HAVELOCK, AT THE ALUM BAGH NEAR LUCKNOW.

No monument erected fair,
To honour'd memory, the last
Regret can rear;
And all true worth is doomed to share
Too oft, alas! has ever cast
Its shadow here:—

Where long the gaping crowd may gaze
Till weariness their wonder wear
To common thought,
And Truth, worn out by length of days,
Is varnished into falsehood fair,
Let such be sought.

More favoured tree that, night and day,
By morn and twilight's beam of gold,
Art doomed to wave
Where travellers pause awhile and say,
"Here sleeps a sage and warrior bold —
'Tis HAVELOCK's grave!"

Not stony thou; untaught, unbid;
Thy ceaseless labour to declare
To passers-by,
Whose sacred ashes here are hid,
Where Truth shall Time itself outwear,
And death shall die.

When, of Ambition's army, they
Who sought with restless zeal, and found,
A crown below,
Have passed from Honour's scroll away,
With every withered wreath that bound
Each mortal brow,

Still, living page that nigh the throne
Of Paradise, no time can dim,
Or flame consume,
His name shall cease not to be known
On thee: a fadeless crown for him
Shall ever bloom.

Rest, warrior, rest! thy victory won,—
Thy marches and thy conflicts o'er,—
Thy country blest:
Nor pestilence, nor midday sun
On Indian plain, shall smite thee more:
Rest, warrior, rest!

So rests his soul where conflicts cease,
In robes of stainless white arrayed,
From every care:
The palms of Victory and peace,
Of ever vernal trees, the shade,
Thrice welcome there!

THE DEPARTED SABBATH.

A Sabbath gone—for ever gone!
Another's sun may not arise
Ere I unclose these wond'ring eyes
Upon the resurrection morn;—

Ere I behold the "great white throne"
On which He sits, before whose face
The Heaven and Earth can find no place,
But man must give account alone:

No sheltering hill—no secret cave,
To hide him from that scene, is there,—
No ocean, in whose depths Despair
Itself could smile to find a grave;

No tempest-laden clouds, whose gloom
Lends a dark sanction to his flight
Who fain would steal, by dead of night,
Back to the silence of the tomb.—

Ere I behold, as far as ken
Can wander through unbounded space,
The countless hosts redeeming grace
Has ransomed of the sons of men;—

See, beautiful in white array
Each heir of heavenly glory stand,
Or stoop to kiss the piercèd hand
Which gives a golden crown away.

A Sabbath gone—for ever gone!
Another's sun may not arise
Ere I unclose these wond'ring eyes
Upon the resurrection morn.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Page 17, line 10.

Whose streets of gold as glass transparent shine.

"And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."— *Rev.* xxi. 21.

Page 17, line 15.

To seraph harps refined, and ever tuned.

"Then crowned again their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned."

MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, b. iii. l. 365.

Page 19, line 3.

The cloud that always must conceal that spot
And Heaven's high-road without me.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way."—*John*, xiv. 6.

Page 19, line 8.

Whence rose a sound as, swifter than their flow,
O'er many waters floats.

"And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."—*Rev.* i. 15.

Page 21, line 8.

Was sorrow e'er like His deep sorrow seen,
Whom Heaven hath sore afflicted?

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."—*Lam.* i. 12.

Page 21, line 19.

The crown He wore
From brier to myrtle grown of living bloom:
Each hill broke forth in singing, and the trees
Clapped all their hands.

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree."—*Isa.* lv. 13.

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."—*Isa.* lv. 12.

Page 38, line 3.

Clouds like the wings of angels.

"Holy thoughts, like stars, arise,
Its clouds are angels' wings."
LONGFELLOW, *Prelude to Voices of the Night.*

Page 63, line 10.

More noble he, &c. Aristides, named "the Just."

Page 79, line 5.

And there are gatherings, chill, forlorn, on Arvon's sea-damp sand.

"On dreary Arvon's shore they lie."—GRAY'S *Bard.*

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